

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee**  
**First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE**  
**15:30 on 5 July 2022**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Peter Lang, Paul Page (Chair), Graham Parker and Andy Pearce

**In attendance:** Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk)

**Also in attendance:** Cllr David LeGrice was in attendance as an observer

**Public:** There were two members of the public in attendance

**17. Welcome**

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report were explained, and the meeting was welcomed.

**18. Apologies for absence**

No apologies had been received and all Committee members were in attendance.

**19. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 29 and 33. Cllr Brooks declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 25, 26 and 28. Cllr Barker declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 26.2, 27 and 32. Cllr Parker declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 25. Cllr Lang declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 26.2 and 27.

**20. The draft minutes of the meeting on 7 June 2022**

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the minutes; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

**21. Public forum**

A comment from a member of the public regarding item 28 had been circulated. It was agreed to take the comment into consideration during the discussion of that agenda item. The member of the public requested an update on his request at the last meeting for the Green Skills Centre to be invited to the Great Big Green Weekend event. Cllr Parker asked for consideration to be given to provision of a transport service for visitors to the Great Big Green Weekend, which will be considered at the next meeting.

**22. The Terms of Reference of the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee**

Cllr Brooks proposed adoption of the Terms of Reference; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

**23. Appointing up to two non-Councillor members to the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee**

Cllr Brooks was impressed by the written submission received but did not think the positions had been advertised widely enough. One of the members of the public in attendance gave some background information about the applicant and her experience in climate change. Cllr Pearce proposed appointing the applicant who had provided the written submission and deferring the appointment of the second member to September's meeting, with officers to ensure the vacancy is advertised in the meantime; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour. Cllr Pearce advised that the appointed person should let officers know if she would have any difficulties attending the meeting with its current schedule. The Clerk advised it would be possible for her to join the meeting via Zoom and officers are looking into solutions to support this.

*One member of the public left the meeting at 15:56*

**24. Monitoring expenditure by this Committee from the climate emergency budget, under delegated authority**

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The Project and Committee Clerk advised of the current position, as follows:

### Climate

### Emergency

### 2022-2023

Budget amount £12,500.00

Remaining £7,500.00

Date	Description	Amount
TBC	Marina Theatre Deep Clean	£5,000.00

### Climate EMR (to be confirmed at Full Council)

Amount £21,500.00

Remaining £9,350.00

Date	Description	Amount
TBC	Climate Survey	£2,150.00
TBC	Kittiwake Officer	£10,000.00

**25. Any matters to raise with Cllr James Mallinder (East Suffolk Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment) and/or the Environment and Waste Working Group, and receiving feedback on any matters previously raised, including the following:**

25.1. A proposal from the Environment and Waste Working Group regarding bulky waste collection to target fly tipping – Cllr Brooks advised meetings are shortly being held with Norse's officer in charge of waste management and with the Clerk. Cllr Parker advised East Suffolk Council will be considering whether to include budget provision for signage. It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting. Cllr Barker enquired whether an approach had been made to Peter Aldous MP, regarding Lowestoft South Beach's Blue Flag status, but the Committee agreed this matter was not for consideration under this agenda item.

**26. The following requests from the Allotments Sub-Committee:**

26.1. The feasibility and environmental impact of installing compostable toilets at the allotment sites – Cllr Brooks advised that the Lowestoft and District Allotment Association had requested consideration of this, and had identified their preferred model, costing approximately £1,000 per unit. Cllr Pearce proposed endorsing the recommendation from the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee to delegate authority to officers to liaise with the Association and identify appropriate locations. Budget provision of £10,000 is available for capital investment in the allotments. Cllr Page would like research to take place on how the compostable toilets are emptied and waste disposed of, and the environmental impact of doing so. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to officers in conjunction with members of the AID Committee and this Committee to find out more information about compostable toilets and the priorities of the Allotments Association.

26.2. The provision of allotment land at Clarkes Lane, including progressing community engagement – Cllr Brooks advised the Lowestoft and District Allotment Association would be generally supportive of this, and has advised there is a need for more allotment sites on the south side of the town. A public survey had been undertaken which had not identified a great deal of public support, but the survey had not been limited to questions regarding allotments alone. Cllr Pearce advised that the land would be managed by the Association and plots should be offered to those on the waiting list

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first. Cllr Barker suggested vehicular access should be considered as the land does not have designated parking. Cllr Parker will liaise with the Community Rail Partnership regarding land on Denmark Road previously used as allotment land. Cllr Pearce proposed progressing exploratory discussions with the Lowestoft and District Allotment Association, involving the Ward Councillors. Cllr Pearce suggested this should include identifying a specific location for the allotment sites, gaging interest from those on the waiting list for allotment plots in this area without designated parking and public engagement with residents as to part of the public open space being given over to allotment land; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

26.3. The expansion of provision of allotments, community gardens and community orchards, including community engagement – This was covered with the consideration of the previous item. Cllr Pearce suggested awaiting the outcome of the exploratory discussions regarding Clarkes Lane and Denmark Road first. Cllr Brooks raised an issue regarding tree watering at Rosedale Park which officers are taking forward.

### **27. Progressing planned projects at Clarkes Lane**

Cllr Pearce advised there had been discussions about allocating an area of land as a wildflower meadow. Cllr Pearce proposed seeking independent expert advice on progressing a wildflower meadow at this location; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

### **28. The use of weed killer in Lowestoft and cohesion between authorities during 'No Mow May'**

Cllr Brooks read out the comment from the member of the public, expressing disappointment that grass verges in the Gunton area had been mown in the height of the flowering season for native wildflowers. Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest as this comment had been posted on the Gunton Residents' Association's Facebook page. Cllr Brooks has written to Suffolk County Council regarding its use of weed killer, and has been advised they hope to cease using it by 2023. Cllr Barker advised weeds growing on pathways could cause accessibility issues. Cllr Page advised leaving verges left uncut in certain areas can cause visibility issues.

*Cllr LeGrice left the meeting 16:54*

Cllr Pearce proposed asking East Suffolk and Suffolk County Councils to confirm the purpose of declaring 'No Mow May' when mowing still takes place during this period, with the response and any next steps to be considered at the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Cllr Lang advised some residents undertake mowing of grass verges themselves. Cllr Brooks asked the Communications Officer to put together publicity on the importance of native wildflowers and why spaces should not be mown at certain times. Cllr Pearce clarified this should be limited to areas owned by the Town Council, and areas where there are a potential health and safety risk, such as the area in front of the Gainsborough Drive pond, will still be maintained.

### **29. A biomass collection device for the Town Council's ponds and waterways**

Cllr Brooks advised this had also been considered by the AID Committee. Cllr Pearce reported the Council had received a report regarding the management of its ponds and waterways. This device could be considered as part of the management regime. The AID Committee has requested further information for consideration at its next meeting. This Committee decided to do the same.

### **30. The provision of bottle banks in the Town Council's parks**

Cllr Brooks understands Town and Parish Councils may be able to generate a small income from having bottle banks on their land. The Project and Committee Clerk understands this would not be relevant to this Town Council but will investigate again. Cllr Lang had previously suggested installing bottle banks at Normanston Park. Cllr Pearce advised certain criteria would need to be met. Cllr Barker advised emptying of the bottle banks can be noisy so the Council should be mindful of installing them where there are nearby residential properties.

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Cllr Pearce advised consideration of this item had been deferred previously as legislation is being considered by Parliament on domestic glass collections.

*The remaining member of the public left the meeting 17:11*

**31. Feedback from a Zoom meeting to review the results of the carbon footprint assessment**

Cllrs Page and Pearce attended a meeting with the Clerk. Cllr Pearce advised the data on Hamilton House is encouraging but this may not be the Council's long-term office base. Further work with commercial tenants is required. An energy study of the Town Hall will be undertaken as part of the refurbishment project. Quarterly Management meetings will be held with the Marina Theatre, where issues there can be discussed. Officers use their own vehicles for Council business and were encouraged to submit mileage claims to ensure the Council has accurate data for its assessment of the impact of this. It was agreed an item should be added to the next agenda to consider how to obtain reliable data for a study of aspects which were not included in the initial assessment, including other buildings, contractor operations and staff travel.

**32. An update on plans for the Great Big Green Weekend events**

The Project and Committee Clerk gave an update on plans the Office Administrator has put into place so far. Cllr Parker suggested approaching Anglia television to cover the event and Cllr Barker suggested approaching BBC Radio Suffolk. Cllr Page advised the Allotments Association will be providing tips for growing produce domestically, Uncle Sid's Zero Waste store have confirmed their attendance and an organisation providing yoga demonstrations has also expressed an interest. Cllr Barker suggested Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Pathways Care Farm should be approached. Officers have been promoting the event on their email signatures. Cllr Pearce suggested promoting the event via Discover Lowestoft and any other available promotional platforms. Cllr Barker offered thanks to those involved with planning the event. Cllr Parker asked if a bus service to transport visitors to the event could be considered.

**33. An update on the work of the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership**

Cllr Pearce reported that a Kittiwake Officer had been appointed. The Partnership is exploring the involvement of offshore windfarms in supporting the kittiwake population. Extra street cleaning is being arranged outside the Marina Theatre during nesting season and a deep clean of the building will be arranged after the nesting season. The AID Committee has supported funding non-lethal nesting deterrent measures, alongside nesting ledges on the other side of the building. A study of urban kittiwake colonies is being undertaken and filming will take place in Lowestoft later in the year. In the meantime, Cllr Pearce will be attending a conference and will feed back to the next meeting. Cllr Page would like this Committee to meet with the doctor undertaking the study when she visits Lowestoft.

**34. Date of the next meeting**

2 August 2022 15:30

**35. Items for the next agenda and close**

Cllr Barker requested an item to progress liaison with Peter Aldous MP regarding Lowestoft's Blue Flag status.

Cllr Parker requested an item to consider more officer home working. This would also need to be considered by the Personnel Committee.

There were no confidential items for consideration and the Chair closed the meeting at 17:46.

**36. Resolution to close the meeting to the public**

Signed: ..... 2 August 2022